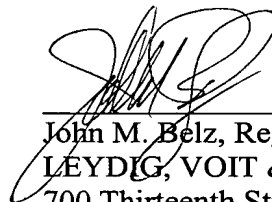


*REMARKS*

In the July 27, 2004, Office Action, claims 3 and 6-9 were indicated as being allowable. Consequently, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitation of claim 7, and claim 6 has been rewritten in independent form. While claim 3 was indicated as being allowable, it was mistakenly identified as a dependent claim. Independent claim 3, therefore, has not been amended. Finally, new independent claim 13 has been added. Independent claim 13 defines a test sample preparation device which, like claim 3, has a key mechanism which includes a post, an annular protrusion on the post, and a notch in the annular protrusion. It is respectfully contended that all claims pending in the application are now patentable.

The Summary of the Invention section of the specification has been amended to conform to the new set of independent claims. No new matter has been entered.

Respectfully submitted,



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